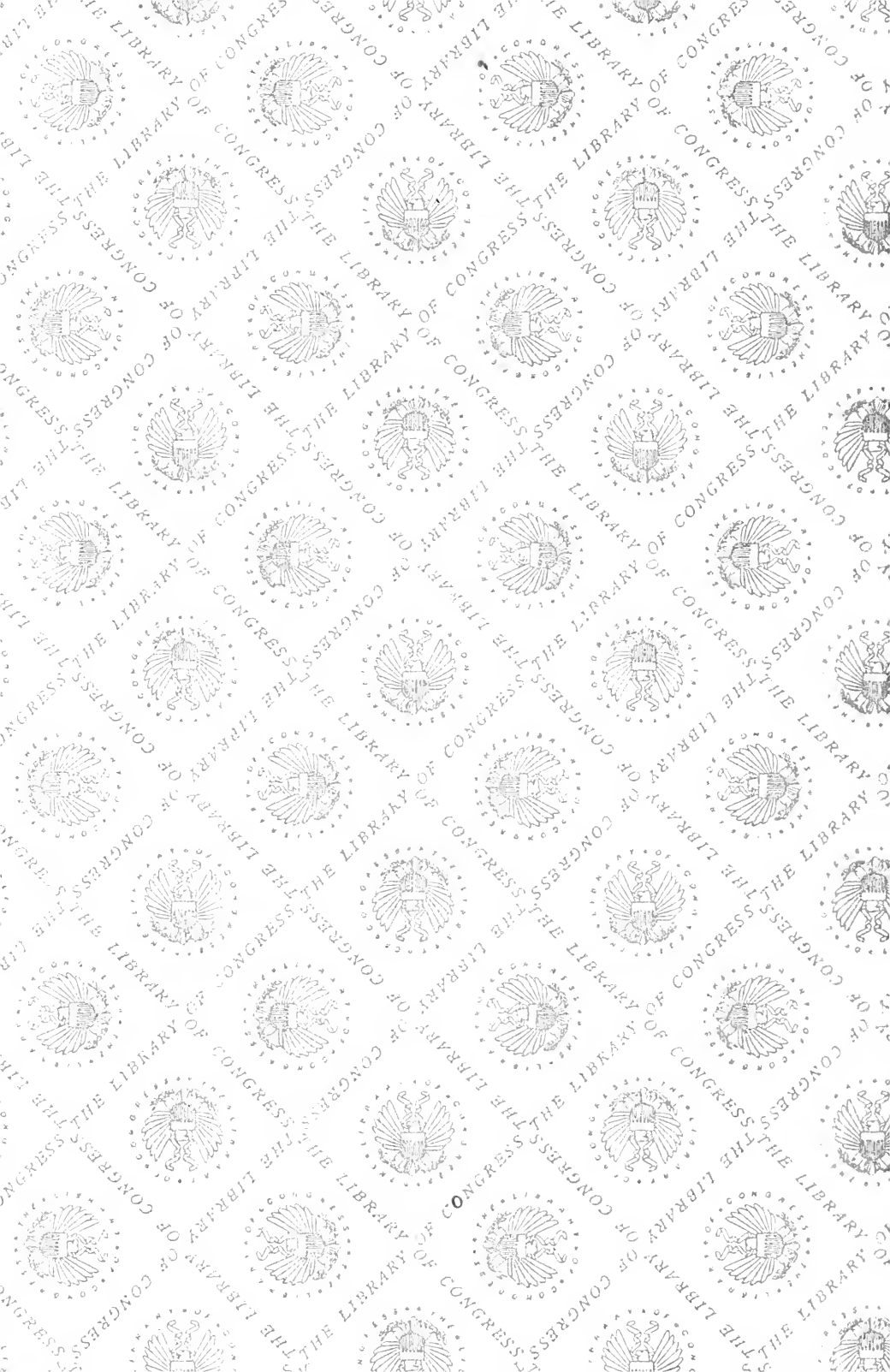
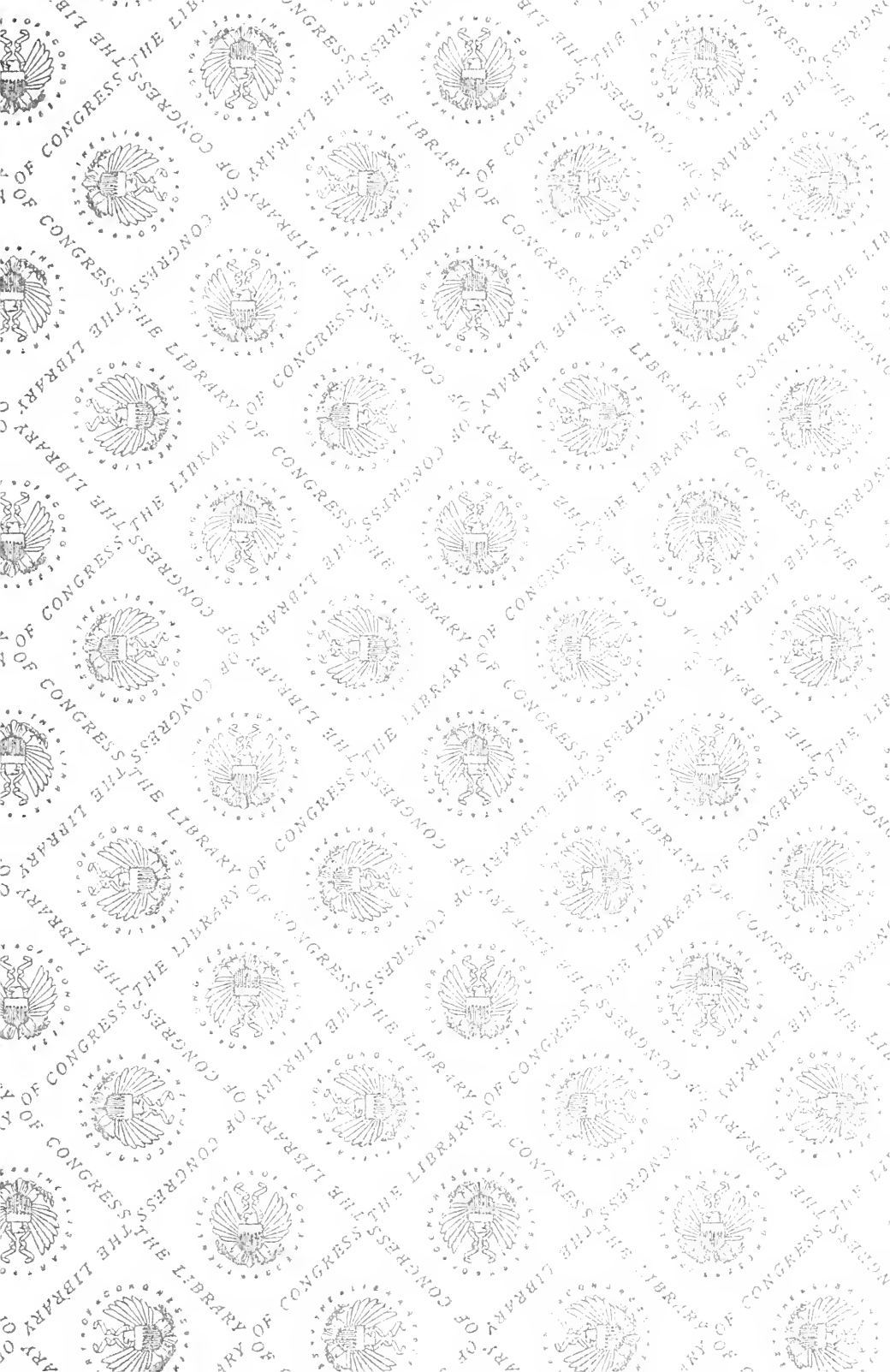


LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00003355330





WASHINGTON AS A CITIZEN

AN ADDRESS BY
HON. DAVID JAYNE HILL

BEFORE
THE WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION
OF NEW JERSEY

With Greeting by ALFRED ELMER MILLS, President,
and Proceedings in the Celebration

AT WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS

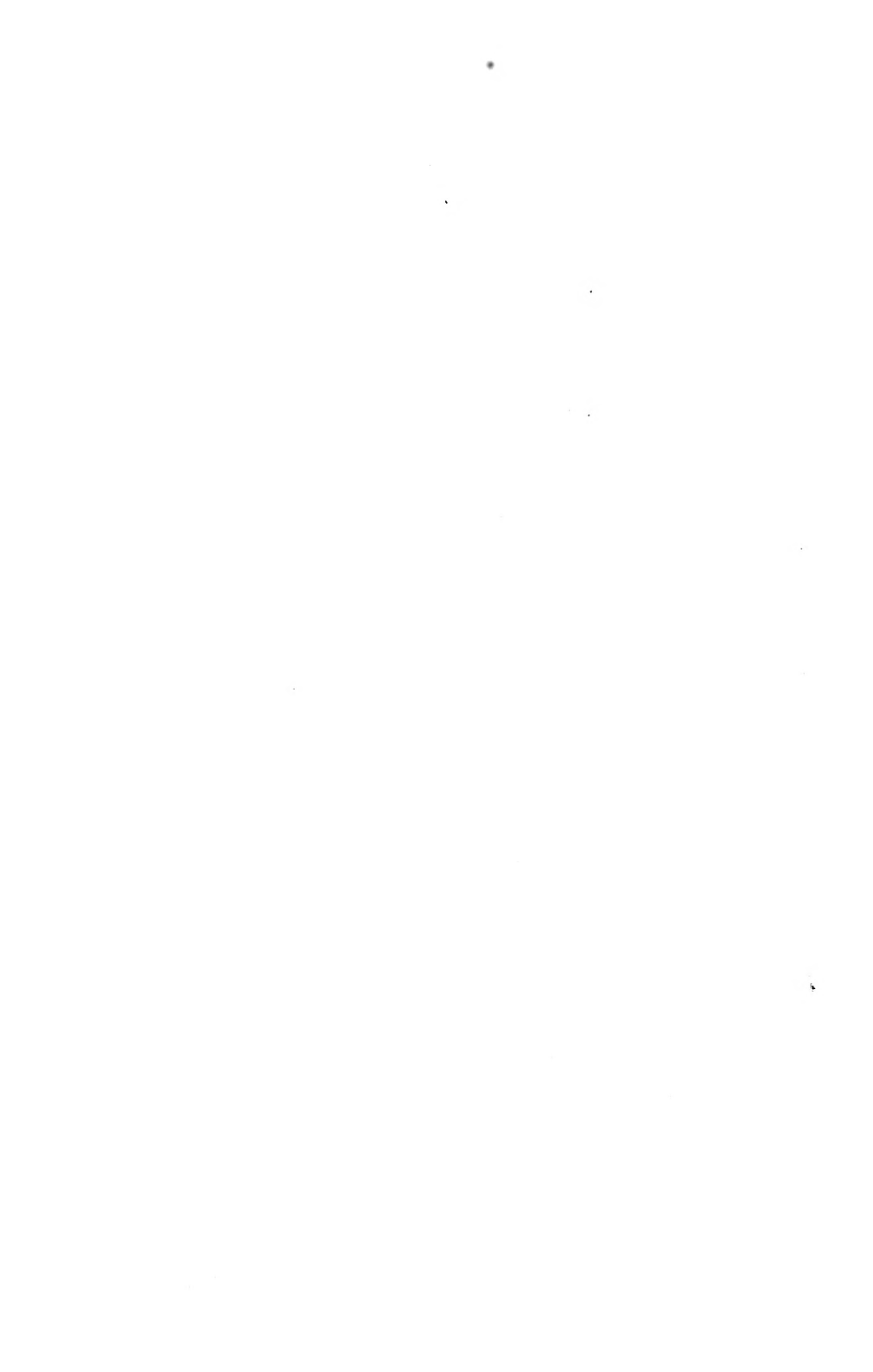
IN MORRISTOWN, N. J.

ON FEBRUARY 22, 1922

E 312
.63
.H646

Washingtoniana

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
RECEIVED
OCT 17 1922
DOCUMENTS DIVISION



ADDRESS

Before the Members of the

WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

The meeting was called to order by President Alfred Elmer Mills.

After the singing of the National Anthem, America, President Mills said:

GENTLEMEN OF THE WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION:

It is mighty nice to have the privilege of extending words of welcome to you and your guests once more, although I am sorry to displace Brother Cutler through whom I sent you a vicarious greeting last year.

Our dear old president Mr. Roberts once suggested that we should have a different presiding officer each year so that each member could preside in turn but as it would take about 500 years to give all our members a chance, and as each member insisted upon presiding during the first hundred years the plan was abandoned and today I must consider myself a sort of composit chairman representing you all.

I may be mistaken in my conclusion but you look just as happy as in the good old days when you decided that Dr. Pierson and I knew nothing about making strong punch.

If John Barleycorn had not misbehaved and become an extremist we might have had our punch today.

That it is dangerous to be an extremist is illustrated by an epitaph which I saw when down South last winter. It was this—

“Ma loved Pa
Pa loved women
Ma caught Pa
With some in swimmin
Here lies ‘Pa”

Your Association is, as usual, in excellent condition notwithstanding it has had to grapple with that Demon called “High Cost of Living:”

Probably most of us are acquainted with that same Demon and can sympathize with the Southern darkey who after he had lost his fourth wife had a call from his Pastor.

In response to the Pastor’s solicitous inquiry as to how he felt he replied “I fell like I was in the hands of an all-wise and unscrupulous providence.”

With the passing of the years we are obliged to face the sad fact that many of our best beloved friends are no longer with us.

During 1921 our death roll was heavy.

Among those who have gone is our good Vice President, Dr. Henry A. Henriques, whose genial presence did so much to make our meetings a success.

Since our gathering of a year ago the chaotic situation prevailing in many parts of the world has made us appreciate the fact that the situation here, bad as it is, might be much worse.

Momentous events are taking place.

The leading nations are trying to make this a safe and a better world, as is evidenced by the recent disarmament conference at Washington which Lloyd George, Prime Minister of England, referred to a couple of weeks ago, as “one of the greatest achievements in the history of the world.”

But after all, in the last analysis, the question whether the future is to bring peace and prosperity to the peoples of the earth depends largely upon its citizens.

Good citizenship is absolutely essential to the solution of our problems and no better way to draw inspiration of that character can be found than in the study of the great Washington.

Our speaker today is one of America's leading citizens.

His wide learning, great ability and statesmanlike qualities have brought him distinction as a Man of Letters, as Historian, as College President, as Minister to Switzerland, as Minister to the Netherlands, as Ambassador to Germany and in numerous other ways.

I take great pleasure in introducing the Hon. David Jayne Hill, whose subject is "Washington as a Citizen."

"WASHINGTON AS A CITIZEN"

AN ADDRESS BY HON. DAVID JAYNE HILL

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Association: Driving over from Newark yesterday to Morristown, there kept running through my mind some words of Sir William Hamilton: "On earth there is nothing great but man; in man there is nothing great but mind." Whether the occurrence to my thought of those words was owing to the companionship of Judge Mills, or my visit to the Washington Association of New Jersey at Morristown, I am not quite sure. But I am certain of this: that in all the great historic movements of the world, in religion, in philosophy and in government, we are led back in our thought to some great person, whose genius or character or action has given a new direction or a new impetus to the development of man. Among those who, by their thought and conduct, have created great periods in the form or the purpose of government, none will deny a pre-eminent place to Washington. A soldier, a statesman and a citizen, he stands out in the bright galaxy of wise and heroic men who fought in the American War for Independence and founded our American system of constitutional government, as the bright particular star.

This distinction has been recognized not only by our own countrymen, who gather in every part of the nation on this day to celebrate the anniversary of his birth, but, for different reasons, no doubt, in many other countries. Even in England, the arch-rebel of 1776 is now claimed as a great Englishman. The Sulgrave Manor in Northamptonshire, an old monastic foundation once owned and occupied as a residence for four generations by a branch of the Washington family, has been purchased, fitted up with ancient furniture and, in the name of George Washington, made the seat of a cult of Anglo-American friendship. Less than a year ago, a bust of Washington, a replica of Houdon's famous original, has been placed in a crypt of St. Paul's, in London, and near the busts of Nelson and Wellington; and a statue, presented by Virginia, has been erected in that "parterre of heroes", Trafalgar Square, where,

unhappily, it is dwarfed by its colossal surroundings. This fact has led the Marquess of Crewe, in a recent article to remark: "It would perhaps be an exaggeration to say of him, as was said of the effigies of Brutus and Cassius, missing from the Roman processions, that his figure outshines all others by its absence; but if the statue could be transferred from Trafalgar Square to Westminster Abbey, a gap would be filled, and many minds would be profoundly gratified."

In our own country, with uninterrupted expressions of veneration, we have recalled and permanently perpetuated the memories that cling round the hallowed places, hallowed for all time by the sojourn and activities of Washington; and it is a great privilege, gentlemen, to come to this spot, twice the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief of our Revolutionary Army, where the spirit of patriotism has singularly remained a dominant note in the life of this community.

I do not know that the imagination has done for Morristown all that it has done for Mount Vernon. There, a custodian, long in service, sees or believes he sees, in the deepening shades of evening, the majestic figure of the General, clad in his great blue mantle, walking amidst the trees and meditating upon the fate of the nation that he loved. Sometimes, with head erect, alert and vigorous with vivacity, he seems to this undoubting observer, to rejoice in some national event of which he appears to have knowledge. At other times, with an air of dejection, he seems like one bearing a heavy burden of sorrow, and appears to be filled with doubt and apprehension, as with bowed head and hesitating steps he moves down the distant vista and vanishes from view.

Now, if one could share this privilege of visualization, it would be interesting, indeed, to watch for the mysterious smile that must pass over his countenance, when visiting delegations come, at the bidding of crowded heads, to plant trees in the grounds of Mount Vernon, or to place garlands at the iron gate of the plain brick vault. What a host they are, these pilgrims of the Old World, whose ancestors looked down upon ours as rebels, fanatics, and hopeless idealists, who actually believed in the capacity of ordinary men to govern themselves,

and to build a habitation of freedom for posterity which internal dissension and the smiting hand of power could not destroy!

And now, why is it not destroyed? What guards it, to-day, from destruction, this great edifice of free, constitutional government in which we live? What is it, but the faith and virtue of the citizens of the Republic? And what gives vigor to their minds, and fidelity to their hearts, if not the great principles,—the distinctive and the often combatted principles—upon which the American Republic was founded?

I turn then, today, to a theme which, in all the discourses about Washington, and in all the acts of commemoration in honor of him, I have never heard distinctly emphasized,—Washington as a Citizen; not the great soldier, not the great statesman, not the great President, but that which every one of us by our own will may be, without the distinction or the emoluments of public office. simply yet grandly, an American Citizen.

There are two methods by which we may approach this theme. One is by setting up an ideal standard of citizenship, a construction of the mind, as we may conceive or imagine it, and then to compare the conduct of Washington with that ideal. The other is, without any theory or any prejudice or any standard, simply to state objectively what Washington as a citizen did or said, leaving to each one's judgment the conclusion to be drawn from the contemplation of the picture thus presented to the mind; and it is this latter method which I shall now briefly apply.

If we accept Washington's testimony, the happiest hours of his existence were those passed in the tranquil seclusion which, in those days of difficult transportation, really meant almost perfect isolation on his estate at Mount Vernon. As a young man, he had defended the western frontier against the incursions of the French and the Indians, and in the State of Virginia he held a high military position; but he was not a lover of fighting and never resorted to warlike methods or action without a sufficient and reasonable cause. He was a lover of peace and happiest in tranquility.

For political life, in its ordinary sense, he had no taste whatever. Not specially endowed with the gift of ready speech, he had no aspiration to be known as an orator, and was never known as one. He set little value upon the applause of public assemblies. He was long a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, and also, from the beginning, of the Continental Congress; but his great influence in these bodies was owing far less to his public utterances than to the confidence in his wisdom as a judicious adviser.

It was in no spirit of bravado or of personal ambition that Washington threw his whole being into the cause of the War for Independence. No truthful revision of history—and men are now much engaged in revising history—can ever accept a pretense that he could, under any circumstances, have favored an indefinite continuance of colonial dependence in relation to the mother-country, or that any other relation than that of subordination would, at that time, have been satisfactory to any political party in England. There was, from the continental character of the American colonies, an utter impossibility, wholly apart from that of submitting to foreign dominion, either by a King or by a Parliament, that a nation composed of free men should be ruled from an island whose only possibility of augmented power consisted in asserting it over distant quarters of the globe. The very expression “Continental Congress” conveyed, and was intended to convey, a revolt against an imperial regime in which, if America was to play in it any role at all, it must necessarily be one of perpetual subordination on the part of a country destined by its nature and its possibilities to become greater and greater, to one whose claim to rule over it rested upon an indefensible moral and legal claim to supremacy. Washington saw this. He saw it clearly, and was, therefore, a convinced believer in immediate American Independence, for which an urgent cause was given by a spirit of arbitrary domination which, if triumphant, would have sealed the fate of the colonies for decades, if not for centuries, to come. At the second Continental Congress, therefore, he appeared in his uniform as a Virginia colonel and wrote to a friend in England: “The

peaceful plains of America are either to be drenched with blood or inhabited by slaves." That is strong language, gentlemen.

Now, happily, today, through participation in a common cause and a profound change in public sentiment, on both sides of the Atlantic, we stand in better relations with the nation against which Washington fought. But we shall gain nothing in friendship with any people by an attempt to denature history. The breach with England was far more than a schism between political parties of the same people, as now many try to represent it; and it is a perversion of the truth to claim that Washington, the first real out-and-out American, an American for seven years, an American in the midst of dreadful sufferings, as the traditions of this town tell you, was really only a disgruntled colonial, or at heart just an ordinary Englishman, or an Englishman like Conway, or Barre, or Pitt, who defended America in Parliament at that time. Pitt's thesis was this,—mark it well—that "the distinction between legislation and taxation is necessary to liberty." Since only the Commons have power to vote taxes, and the Americans are not represented in Parliament, he argues, there exists no right in Parliament to tax the Americans; and yet, he affirms, the Americans, being subjects of Great Britain, though not taxable by the British House of Commons, are subject to the combined legislation of the Commons, the Lords, and the Crown, which are equally legislative bodies, to which all British "subjects" must submit.

Now, Washington's thesis was very different. It was, that the American people were, and of right ought to be, a self-governing people, who owed no allegiance to the Crown and the Lords of England that was not perfectly voluntary, and that these had no rightful authority to legislate for them. Government—this was Washington's thesis—government should be representative, and the American colonists were no more truly represented by the Crown or the Lords of England than they were in the Commons. They had not chosen them. That was Washington's thesis.

Now, it is time that we should realize that there was, and

is, a great gulf between the British and the American theories of government. You will not accuse me of making any assault upon British imperialism, I am sure, when I point out this difference; but it would involve a confusion of thought to affirm that there is no essential difference, or to assume that Washington was not aware of it, when it was the mainspring and justification of all his years of combat and sacrifice and desperate struggle.

Honest international amity at present, based on reason, interest, and growth of enlightenment,—very sure and true foundations for international amity, an amity which we should earnestly cultivate as far as possible—does not require to be strengthened on our part by an extenuation of the past, or by an endeavor, in circumstances which call for a change in policy, to represent that, in some mystical manner, there was no disunion or hard feeling, and that amity has always existed.

Right-minded men do well to forgive dead generations for a hostility that no longer exists, upon the assurance and some evidence that it is disavowed, and not likely to be repeated; but an effort to efface and extinguish a conflict of principles by the Hegelian method of asserting that negation and affirmation are the same thing, when seen in their higher unity, is impossible to a sound intelligence and a conscientious loyalty to the truth. To apply the conclusion, you cannot honor Washington, as you do honor him in your hearts and minds, unless you are ready to admit that the cause for which he imperilled his life, until it was triumphant, was in itself, and must stand forever, as a good cause, as a justified cause, and a cause which it would have been basely ignominious, as well as technically treasonable, with Benedict Arnold and Charles Lee, to have abandoned in the midst of the struggle. I cannot, therefore, listen with any patience to any American when he asserts, or implies, as I have heard it both asserted and implied, that it would have been better if the War for Independence had never occurred, and if we were, today, a part of the British Empire, now preferably referred to as the British Commonwealth. I should prefer to maintain the thesis, that it was the example of the American revolt that made possible the very idea of a

British Commonwealth, by exposing the futility of empire in its old historic sense. (Applause).

We are today, as a nation, with very great prestige, reaching out the hand of friendship and offering the blessings and security of peace in the name of impartial justice to all the other peoples of the world. It is, gentlemen, a great historic moment, when it is a joy to be alive, and to be an American. (Applause). But if—let me say this—but if, as the price of it, and in return for international amity and understanding, I had to forget and renounce the glory of the American War for Independence, or to obscure its triumph by some wish for absorption into some larger and wider relationship, I should wish that I had not lived to see this day. (Applause).

The American Revolution was no immature fruit of political philosophy, no sudden plunge into the uncertainties of an untried freedom, no scheme of ambitious leaders to secure personal advantage, but the clear and reasoned determination of the people, or of a large portion of the people to be rid, forever rid, of a relation of dependence and subordination that brought them no real protection and much humiliation. Needed laws were denied them, and their commerce and industries were repressed. Now, it was not against law that they were rebelling. Their revolt was made in the name of law. The protest of the colonies was not primarily against the tax, nor yet against the withholding of representation in the law-making body, but against the King's refusal to grant the colonies a government based on law. Read your Declaration of Independence again, and do not forget these passages. The first charge "submitted to a candid world," to use the language of the Declaration, is: "He has refused his assent to laws of immediate and pressing importance and necessary for the public good." That was the gravamen in that terrible indictment. It runs through the whole twelve subsequent accusations of misrule, ascending through the entire gamut of complaint with increasing intensity, declaring, among other things, "He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers"; and ending with the climax, as if it were the very acme of governmental perversity: "he

has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws, giving his assent to their pretended acts of legislation." The claim to law—read it again—the claim to law, as the most precious possession of citizenship, recurs at intervals throughout the remainder of the document. Three times, in the midst of the fourteen additional specifications of usurpation, the writer of the Declaration returns to his demand for unperverted law as the one central purpose of the document. (Applause).

Throughout twelve years of public debate, which preceded the final act of separation, it was the conviction of great jurists, on both sides of the Atlantic, that resistance to the encroachments of the Crown and the Parliament was justified by all the traditions of English liberty. But who, in England, could, if disposed, resist those encroachments? The American colonists did resist them, and thereby they did a service for those traditions which is not to be denied. They had taken a step in advance of the mother-country, which did not dare to challenge the throne. Why? Because the throne was the strong bond of empire, as it is today. But the American colonists were ripe for independence. They had reached that maturity of political development, which, as Turgot said, entitled them to separate, as the ripened leaves of autumn fall from the parent tree. Already they were capable of assuming those responsibilities in the family of nations which independence implies, and of maintaining that condition of public peace and private order without which no government has a right to exist.

Now, it was a new citizenship, in no sense identical with that under which he was born, that inspired Washington, when he responded to the call from Massachusetts, where blood had already been shed, and under the old elm tree at Cambridge took the oath as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army.

If the General was the first military man of his time among the colonists, it was not in the spirit of a professional soldier that he assumed his duties, but as the citizen most fitted for his task. "If you speak of solid information and sound judgment," said Patrick Henry, "Colonel Washington is un-

doubtedly the greatest man upon the floor." Rising in his place, the chosen leader modestly thanked Congress for the honor it had bestowed upon him, declining the offer of compensation, and adding, in words which are worthy of perpetual remembrance, "I will keep an exact account of my expenses; those, I doubt not, will be discharged, and that is all I desire." No bonus for Washington! (Prolonged applause). No salary for Washington! (Applause). For Washington, the service of a citizen.

Now, it was, in truth, for a conception of citizenship different from any that the world had known, that the war was fought. How faithful to it the great leader was, was shown when, in May, 1782, when the dilatory procedure of Congress—Congress are so much alike—had created in the army a spirit of unrest and dissatisfaction that made the effort of the struggle seem almost barren of results. Looking to their General as the one firm, dependable reality in the discouraging situation, an address was presented to him, recognizing him as the only means of saving the country, and intimating that he should assert himself as a controlling authority in civil affairs, to whose command the army would rally in support.

Unquestionably, the address presented to Washington meant that, if he would consent to receive it, a crown was within his grasp; and he himself regarded it as making this suggestion. His reply was a luminous expression of his character. "Be assured, Sir," he said, "no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army as you have expressed, and which I must view with abhorrence and reprehend with severity. I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address which seems to me big with the greatest mischiefs that can befall my country. Let me conjure you, Sir, then, if you have any regard for the country, concern for yourself or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or anyone else, a sentiment of the like nature." (Applause).

What was it that aroused in Washington such indignation, such manifest resentment?

I have recently, thinking of this occasion, read with deepest interest, portions of Washington's voluminous correspondence, in which his most intimate thoughts find full expression. The impression left on my mind, which, if time permitted, could be fortified by extensive citations, is, that, although he was not, in the strict sense, a political philosopher, he had a very clear personal conception of what government should be, and of the citizen's personal relation to government. As it appeared to his mind, government should be founded wholly upon the nature of the citizen,—the nature of the citizen, as a moral personality responsible to his Creator for his conduct, endowed with freedom and the possessor of inherent rights, which government should never attempt, and never be permitted, to take away. In order that it might not do so, governments should never be imposed upon society by an arbitrary external force. Force is necessary to protect rights and to punish the violation of them, and so long as unjust men exist and possess power, such violation will occur; but the force that is to protect men should proceed from themselves, by their own free and publicly organized determination, should be limited in such a manner that it may not itself become a violator of inherent personal rights, and should always be under their control.

With such a conception of the citizen, and of government, Washington could no more permit himself to become a personal dictator than he could accept the absolute authority of the King.

He had challenged not only the authority of the King, but also the absolute pretensions of Parliament, in which the Colonies were not even represented. In harmony with this conception, he could not even accept the authority of the Continental Congress, or of the Legislature of Virginia, or of any other legislative body to govern absolutely, without restriction of any kind even by a majority, for the reason that there are in moral human personality inherent rights which majorities have never bestowed, and which, therefore, no legitimate authority can take away.

The basic idea of the whole revolutionary movement was, of course, personal liberty,—freedom to think, to act, to trade, to acquire and possess property without fear of expropriation, to develop one's faculties, to rise to any station in society for which one's native endowments or industry might fit him. It involved the sweeping away, the entire sweeping away, of all obstacles to the accomplishment of these ends. Rank and titles were to be abandoned. The individual was to count for what he was, subject to no attainder.

The result in practice was not an unmixed blessing. Unlimited freedom menaced private rights and public order. The period from the conclusion of peace to the adoption of the Constitution, usually referred to as the "Critical Period", was, to intelligent minds, one of uncertainty and of gloom.

During these four years, Washington was merely a private citizen in this critical period of our country's history. His time was largely devoted to a consideration of the interests of his country and in finding means of establishing the equilibrium between liberty and order.

He did not need the results of his observation to convince him that unregulated democracy was a dangerous experiment. It involved both weakness and despotism;—weakness, because under it government had no cohesion or continuity of action, and was blown about by every wind of doctrine and every private interest; despotism, because apparent majorities were found always to be subject to a selfish control by interested minorities, regardless of the general good.

The only bars to anarchy, at that time, were the Constitutions of the several States. These happily were founded on Bills of Rights, but their imperfections were numerous. The chief defect in the whole system was the absence of any truly national law or the authority to create or to execute it. The old confederation was a rope of sand. It was this that gave to Washington his chief concern; for, notwithstanding the struggle for government by law, the law was still non-existent.

We cannot too frequently recall what was original and distinctive in our system of federated representative government, in which every form of public authority was intended to be

deliberately limited by law, in the sense that law is the permanent expression of the reasoned will of the people.

First of all, that will, proceeding from a consciousness of moral personality and accountability, guards itself against the government it would create by according to government only definite and limited powers. It makes that charter a fundamental law, by which the legality of all acts and statutes proposed by the National or the State legislatures is to be judged. It creates a National Judiciary to interpret and apply that law, and a National Executive to see that it is enforced. Thus, in the intention of the founders of our constitutional system, every element and authority of government was to be the creature and the servant of law.

In creating a government to protect their inherent rights as freemen, the framers of the Constitution made provision that the government they brought into being should not itself be able to destroy those rights. In the history of liberty, much has been said of Magna Charta, wrung from the hands of royal power by the barons at Runnymede, by which all were protected in their persons and property, and could not be "outlawed, or exiled, or otherwise destroyed, but by the lawful judgment of their peers, or the law of the land." But this concession permitted that anything might be done, if it was by the will of those who actually made the law, and they were far less than a majority of the people. The American Colonists believed—Washington believed—that there were things that should never be done, even by "the law of the land". There were, they thought, some rights so individual, so necessary to moral freedom, so important to preserve, that government had no right over them; and that was the distinctive note of our constitutional system.

If time were at my disposal—but I must not weary you—I should like to show, not only how the Constitution, often imperfectly copied, has become a model for most of the free governments of the world, but also how it overcame the anarchy of the time in which it was established, when discontented men were trying to make their selfish interests the law of the land, ordering State legislatures to abolish their debts, or

give them money by the free use of the printing press; when the courts were urged to hand down decisions in their interest, on pain of abolition; when idle or improvident men claimed the right to share equally in the goods of the more fortunate; and ambitious demagogues, then, as now and always, aided and promoted these demands as a means of obtaining public office.

It is an old story, recurrent whenever and wherever democracy has not had the wisdom to set bounds to the rapacity of men, through the powers of government. Had it not been for the high resolution that actuated the founders of constitutional government in America, our country would have eventually fallen into the economic condition in which Russia is today. There were men, at that time, who knew it. Republican government, Hamilton said, would have been "disgraced and lost to mankind forever", and we should have fallen a prey to conquest and subjection by the intrigues of European powers, extending their eminent domain over us, as they have over Africa, and Asia, and Oceania, and over every available portion of the globe, where there was no power of defense.

Much of the drift of recent years has been, distinctly, away from restraint on the powers of government. More and more, modern nations have tended to become economic organisms, in which there is, on the part of the people, increasing dependence for the means of living upon the authority, the benefactions, and the gratuities of the political State. Materialistic conceptions of the nature and origin of man, and of his social relations, have added emphasis to this dependence. Men are attracted by the idea that society owes them a living, and that it can be obtained through the exercise of political power. To carry out their task, whole nations have sought to prey upon other nations, not only forcing upon them the purchasing of their commodities, which is chiefly an oriental pastime, but demanding the possession of their resources and tribute to make those resources available. Internally, these tendencies take the form of Socialism; externally, the form of Internationalism—a form of Internationalism of a socialistic as opposed to a juristic type.

The sophisms that underlie these tendencies are as seductive as they are dangerous. They claim a moral character which they do not really possess, appealing at first to a spirit of generosity and benevolence, but ending by the imposition of exorbitant demands, in the name of pretended justice, which is often so bold as to ridicule mere voluntary personal charity; and that beautiful grace of the New Testament is represented as a mere refuge from a wider responsibility.

In truth, the word "responsibility" has almost lost its primitive and normal meaning. Socialism makes the industrious and the provident responsible for the idle and the profligate, and goes to the length of holding the virtuous accountable for the existence of crime. By destroying the individual for the benefit of society, it annihilates the right of the only units that possess any moral consciousness, or have any moral quality,—individual men and women—and converts the whole conception of morality, which is grounded upon free personality, or else it has no ground at all, into terms of mechanism and statistical equalization of material conditions. Carried to its logical result, it would wholly dry up the foundation of personal initiative, and make every man, and woman and child in the community a pensioner of the State, regardless of merit, service, or capacity. (Applause).

I shall detain you but a moment more. The pivot upon which this social mechanism revolves is the power of unlimited taxation, a power which the founders of this nation carefully refused to grant to government. It would take from those who have and distribute to those who have not, on the ground that private possession is a wrong done to society, and that need is the true and only measure of demand.

More than forty years ago, old John Ruskin, one of the most notable social reformers in his time, had the courage to say: "There is nothing really more monstrous in any recorded savagery or absurdity of mankind, than that governments should be able to get money for any folly they choose to commit, by selling the right of taxing future generations to the end of time." Today, they not only do this, but they do not wait for the future generations. (Laughter). They take

what they please, and they spend it as they like. And in this country, a very few hundred men can do that, regardless of the obligations they have already incurred and imposed on the future. And, when by this process a nation has impoverished itself, it turns to any other nation that has any resources left, and invites it to join in the orgy of prodigality.

In disturbed world conditions, it is not unnatural to argue that, if, in a community, every individual is responsible for the condition of all the rest, every nation is responsible for the misfortunes of all the others. Misconduct ceases to be a criterion of judgment. A universal communism tends to reduce all to the same level, to distribute the wealth and resources of the world pro rata, irrespective of effort, capacity, or desert; and national prudence, like individual thrift, is brought under condemnation as a mark of selfishness.

Now, national duty, like individual duty, is, of course, a reality; but duty, whether national or individual, has no other sound basis than the reciprocity of rights. We can determine our duty in a scientific and reasonable way, only by asking ourselves what we might justly demand from others; and, in this light, is it not plain that responsibility is not unlimited? It does not in reality extend beyond the power to control, in some degree, at least, the conduct of those for whom it is held that we are responsible. I think it is a defensible maxim, that our responsibility as a nation is rightly measured by the limitation of our power over other nations. If they will not conform to our standards, how can we be held responsible for their misfortunes? We cannot suffer them to drag us down to ruin by their folly, their jealousies, or their extravagance. (Applause)

It is in connection with this aspect of national duty that Washington, in his "Farewell Address", points out the seductive nature of what he calls "foreign influence".

With this, in recent years, we have become familiar in the form of what we now call "propaganda"; which, in secrecy, subtlety, and perversity, has been developed into a fine art. Like ether, it is invisible, and so volatile that an attempt to

confine or imprison it only gives it a wider diffusion; and the more we absorb of it, the more unconscious we are of its existence, as it gently puts us to sleep and obliterates the use of our senses. (Applause) And what is most alarming of all is, that it often emanates from sources that are so respectable that they never awaken our suspicion.

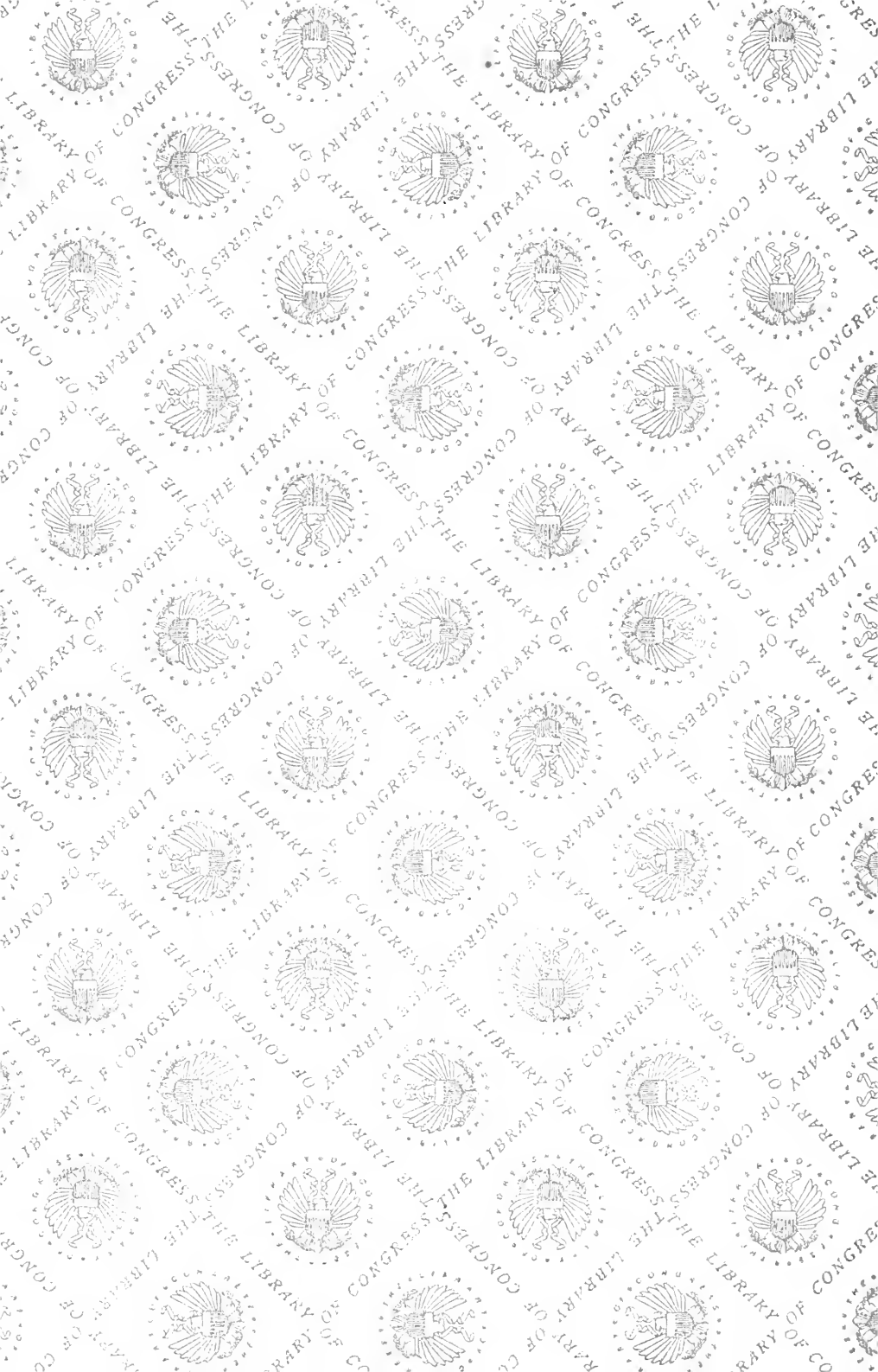
It was against this peril, more menacing to our national life, believe me, more menacing to our national life than advancing armies, that Washington wrote: "Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens, the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake; since history and experience prove, that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy, to be useful, must be impartial, else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil, and even to second, the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favorite are likely to become suspected and odious; while the tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests."

When we seriously inquire—and that is the principal thing—what will most effectively safeguard our heritage from foes within and enemies without, we ask a question very difficult to answer. There was a time when I looked most hopefully to our universities and colleges, but foreign influences which have crept in during the last few decades greatly diminish confidence. So many of our teachers, even of the highest grade, seem almost ashamed of American provincialism. They prefer, very much, to follow the foreign examples and to display their learning acquired in foreign universities. At times, there seems to be hope in the fidelity of a political party, faithful to our best national traditions; but a personal interest in novelties and class-demands, on the part of office-seekers, qualifies this expectation. A free press once promised to be an effective guardian of liberty, and the power

of the press is, of course, not to be questioned as a power; but it is at present controlled, in part, by influences that are wholly subversive of our constitutional government, and some of this power is under the direction of foreign intrigue. I conclude, therefore, that now, as always, the real bulwark of our system is the intelligence and the virtue of the citizen. If they fail, the whole edifice will fall in ruins.

Happily, the safety of the nation still rests in their hands. It was between the trials and perils of the battlefield and the arduous tasks of the Presidency, that Washington, in retirement from public office at Mount Vernon, found the most fruitful years of contemplation and reflection; when, as a mere citizen, he thought of the dangers to the Republic, and how to avert them, while he watched the ceaseless flow of the shining river on its never-ending journey to the sea;—the symbol of our national life that never rests, but hurries ever on to the fulfillment of its destiny. Out of that solitude and those moments of deep anxiety, came the great constructive thoughts embodied in our political edifice,—thoughts that still live on in the nation. It is our privilege to perpetuate them, to apply them, and to defend them. And to be, with Washington, an American citizen, is a nobler privilege than to wear a crown. (Prolonged applause).





WERT BOOKBINDING

JAN 1989

Grantville, PA

